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CONTENTS

● Moqattiat in the Quran

● Existence of God
— Khan Bahadur M. Ata-ur-Rahman, M

● Herr Hitler and the Jews
—Zainab Begam, *bint* Dr. Hashmat-Ullah Kh

● Future Religion of Mankind

● Reviews

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مترجمہ

جناب سعید انصاری صاحب ایم اے (کولمبیا)

مقدمہ از پروفیسر محمد مجیب صاحب بی اے (آکسن)

قیمت عہ

مکتبہ جامعہ دہلی

معاہدۂ عمرانی

از ژاں ژاک رُوسو

مترجمہ ڈاکٹر محمود حسین خاں صاحب ایم اے۔ پی ایچ۔ ڈی

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نحمدہٗ ونصلی علیٰ رسولہ الکریم

MOQATTIAT IN THE QURAN*

Some people are of opinion that the abbreviations occurring in the Holy Quran are devoid of meaning, and have been placed here and there at random, without any connection between them and the rest of the text. This idea is not correct : it is contradicted by these abbreviations themselves.

These abbreviations are like sealed locks placed upon the meaning and the subject-matter of the Holy Quran ; so much so that one cannot penetrate to this subject-matter without opening these locks first. Comprehension of the Holy Quran, thus, depends upon a proper solution and understanding of these *Moqattiat*.

Variations in the Abbreviations

My research has led me to the conclusion that whenever there is a change in the *Moqattiat* there is a corresponding change in the subject dealt with ; and that whenever a set of these abbreviations occurs in the beginning of a *Surah* which is followed by other *Surahs* not beginning with *Moqattiat*, then all these *Surahs* constitute a distinct group devoted to discussion of the same subject. Similarly all those *Surahs* which begin with the same *Moqattiat* are

* Translated from a writing of Amir-ul-Momineen Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Massih II.

inter-related from the point of view of the questions dealt with therein.

Casting a glance at the Holy Quran we cannot but be struck with the idea that these abbreviations seem to be occurring according to some definite plan. We find *Surah Baqrah* beginning with الٓمٓ and *Surah Al-i-Imran* also beginning with the same. *Surah Nisa*, *Maida* and *An'am*, which follow, are without abbreviations. Then follows *Surah A'raf* which begins with المٓصٓ: and is followed by *Surah Anfal* and *Baraat*, both without abbreviations. The next three *Surahs* (*Yunas*, *Hud* and *Yusuf*), begin with الٓرٰ. In *Surah Ra'd* which comes after these, مٓ has been added to الٓرٰ, but it has been placed between ل and ر, whereas in المٓصٓ the addition of ص is made at the end of الٓمٓ. Now, if these abbreviations carry no meaning in themselves and are not connected with the rest of the text, one would suppose that just as in the case of المٓصٓ, ص was added at the end, similarly م should have been placed at the end of الٓرٰ. But the fact that it has been placed between ل and ر indicates clearly that the alterations take place in accordance with some precise principle. When we find that the *Surahs* beginning with الٓمٓ are placed first, and are followed by those which begin with الٓرٰ, we begin to perceive that from the point of view of the subject-matter, الٓمٓ, very likely, has precedence over الٓرٰ; and when we come across م and ر together in one place in the beginning of *Surah Ra'd*, and find that here too م precedes ر, we feel sure that the abbreviations occurring in the Holy Quran are not meaningless, nor have they been placed haphazard in it. After *Surah Ra'd*, in *Surah Ibrahim* and *Surah Hajr* الٓرٰ has been used,

and these *Surahs* are followed by *Surah Nahl* and *Surah Bani Israil* which do not begin with *Moqattiat*. After these *Surahs* there comes *Surah Maryam*, which begins with كٓهٰيٰعٓصٓ. *Surah Maryam* is followed by *Surah Taha* which opens the abbreviation *Taha*. In *Surahs Anbiya*, *Haj*, *Maminoon*, *Noor* and *Furqan* no *Moqattiat* have been used; so these *Surahs* should be regarded as being governed by the same *Moqattiat* which occur in the beginning of *Surah Taha*. *Surah Sho'ara*, which comes next, begins with طسٓمٓ; in other words the *Ta* of *Surah Taha* has been kept, but *Ha* has been replaced by *Seen* and *Meem*. The next *Surah* is *Surah Namal* and begins with *Ta Seen*, in which abbreviation the *Meem* has been omitted but the *Ta* and *Seen* have been retained. *Surah Qasas* again begins with طسٓمٓ; in other words the subject specially connected with this abbreviation has again been brought under discussion in *Surah Qasas*. But then the next *Surah*, which is *Surah Ankabut*, begins with *Alif Lam Meem*: and once more the subject of the all-embracing knowledge of God has been brought under discussion, and treated from a new point of view to meet a new need. (I am not here discussing the arrangement of the Holy Quran, but still it may not be out of place to say here that the repetition of *Alif Lam Meem* is due to the fact that in *Surah Baqrah* the people addressed were the unbelievers, while in this *Surah* the believers have been addressed.) After *Ankabut* come *Surahs Room*, *Lukman* and *Sijdah*, all three of which begin with *Alif Lam Meem*. Then *Surahs Ahzab*, *Saba* and *Fatir* are without *Moqattiat* and would thus be regarded as being governed by the previous *Surahs*. *Surah Yaseen*, which comes after these, begins with *Yaseen*. *Surah Saaffat* coming next is without *Moqattiat*. The next *Surah* which is *Surah Sad* begins with *Sad*. *Surah Zumur* being without *Moqattiat* would be regarded as falling under the previous *Surah*. The next to come after this opens with *Ha Meem*, as do *Surah* حٰمٓ *Sijdah* and *Surah Shura*,

in the one mentioned last the abbreviation *Ain Seen Qaf* is added, however. *Surah Zukhruf* comes next and this also opens with *Ha Meem*; and so do *Surah Dukhan*, *Jasia* and *Ahqaf*. *Surah Mohammad*, *Fath* and *Hojorat* which follow are without *Moqattiat*. Then *Surah Qaf* begins with *Qaf*, and then upto the end of the Holy Book the subject under discussion remains the same.

The definite arrangement which underlies the use of the abbreviations conclusively points to the fact that these are not without meaning. The first abbreviation to be used is *Alif Lam Meem*, then *Alif Lam Meem Sad*, ص being added; after these two we have *Alif Lam Ra*, then *Alif Lam Meem Ra*, in which there is an addition of *Meem*. The next abbreviation to occur is *Qaf Haya 'ain Sad* in which four letters have been added to *Qaf*. The next is *Ta Ha*, which then undergoes a slight alteration and becomes *Ta Seen Meem*. The omission of certain abbreviations on certain occasions and their repetition on certain others is a clear and unmistakable indication of the fact that He who has put them in, has put them in to serve a definite purpose and to give a definite meaning, although people may not understand it. If the *Moqattiat* were put in without any precise meaning being intended, then there was no reason to vary them, omitting some and bringing in new ones, or repeating the old ones in themselves sometimes, and sometimes bringing them in with others added to them.

Besides, there is an other consideration which supports this view, an argument which is deducible from what the critics of Islam have said with regard to the arrangement of the Holy Quran. It is alleged by them that the basis of the arrangement of the Holy Quran is the size of its *Surahs*; that the longer *Surahs* have been put first and are followed by others which are not quite as long. If this view is correct, then, is it not significant that although the *Surahs* have been put together according to their size, still the same kind

of, or similar abbreviations, happen to have fallen all in one place coming one after the other. The *Surahs* beginning with *Alif Lam Meem*, are in a group in one place; those beginning with *Alif Lam Ra* are found together in another place; *Ta Ha* and its allied abbreviations, too, occur together; followed by another group beginning with *Alif Lam Meem*, and then one which opens with *Ha Meem*; and so on. Is it not curious that, if the *Surahs* are arranged according to their size, the different sets of *Moqattiat* should signify different specific sizes? If we concede only this and no more, it is proved that the *Moqattiat* are not without meaning, having a bearing upon the size of the *Surahs*. But the fact of the matter is that the coming together of similar and allied *Moqattiat* means that they have a very clear and at the same time a very deep significance, and that the *Moqattiat* are like keys with regard to the *Surahs* which open with them.

In order to find a clue to the meaning of the *Moqattiat* we should, in my opinion, look to the Holy Quran itself. Let us take, for instance, the *Moqattiat* الٓمٓ and الٓرٰ. We find that *Surah Baqrah* opens with *Alif Lam-Meem*, which abbreviation is followed by the words: "This is a Book in which there is no element of doubt and which is a sure guidance for the *Mottaqin*". Then *Surah Al-i-Imran* begins with the same *Moqattiat* which here are followed by the words: "I am Allah the best Knower, there is no god but He, the Ever-Living, the Self-Subsisting, by Whom All things subsist; He has revealed to you the Book with truth". It should be borne in mind that the words *Haq* and *Rabi* in reality denote the same meaning. In other words in *Surah Baqrah* the *Moqattiat* are followed by a sentence which mentions a book in which there is no element of doubt or risk or danger. In *Al-i-Imran* also the same *Moqattiat* are followed by a similar reference to that book. Again in *Surah A'raf* we have *Alif-Lam Meem Sad* immediately followed by a sentence which speaks of a book with respect to which "let

there be no misgiving in your mind"; in other words, a book in which there is no possible shadow of doubt. The next *Surah* to begin with *Alif Lam Meem* is *Surah Ankabut* which is separated by other *Surahs* from the first group opening with the above *Moqattiat*; but here also *Alif Lam Meem* is immediately followed by: "Do men think that they would be left alone on saying we believe, and not be tried. And certainly we tried those before them, so Allah will certainly know those who are true and He will certainly know the liars."

It is to be noted that in these verses also mention has, by implication, been made of a book possessing the attributes which have been spoken of on the previous occasions, as test or examination implies removal of doubt. So here too we find the same subject under discussion which was treated in *Surah Baqrah* and *Al-i-Imran*, but on the previous occasions humanity in general was addressed and here only the believers, who are warned that as long as there remained any vestige of doubt clinging to their mind they could not be accepted as having purified themselves perfectly. In *Surah Room*, too, the same subject has been discussed though in this case the discussion is rather subtle. God Almighty says, "The Word of God, that has come down with regard to Rome, will most certainly be fulfilled." Thus, instead of referring to the whole book, attention has been called to only a portion of it.

Next we have *Surah Luqman* which begins with الم, followed by "These are verses of a wise Book". Here also, the word *Hakeem* occurring in this verse points to the same fact, *i.e.*, certainty. Or in other words we can say that the subject discussed in the earlier portion of *Surah Baqrah* has been touched again. Then in *Surah Sijdah* we have الم followed by: "Revelation of the Book: there is no doubt in it: from the Lord of the worlds," *i.e.*, here also we have mention of a book free from all doubt. These instances show that wherever the expression الم occurs, we invariably

have the same subject under discussion, *i.e.*, man being given sure and certain knowledge. In the face of this clear evidence, how can it be justified to say that the *Huruf-i-Moqattiat* have been placed haphazard in the Quran and that there is no meaning in them. The expression الم, as we have seen, always occurs when removal of doubts from the mind and creation of perfect certainty in their place is aimed at. As such certainty can be created by perfect knowledge alone, it is clear that الم is an abbreviation of انا الله اعلم (I am God Almighty, the best Knower. If you wish to be free from doubts and misgivings you should turn to My word and follow the Book sent down by Me).

Let us now take the case of الر. Here again, on scrutinizing the *Surahs* which open with this abbreviation, we find that the same subject-matter is common to them all.

A collective look at their opening passages indicates that the subject brought under discussion is of two kinds: (1) old history from which such instances have been selected as bear upon the punishment incurred by the wicked; (2) and the story of the creation of the phenomena of life. *Surah Yunas*, by using the expression called *Istifham-i-Inkariyya*, it has been pointed out that Messengers of God have always been appearing in this world. In *Surah Hud* it is pointed out in the first place that no nation remains stagnant for ever but keeps moving constantly within a circle; and then, after referring to the creation of Life, it has been stated that progress in this world is taking place under the law of evolution. In the next *Surah*, *i.e.*, *Surah Yusuf*, world history has been referred to in clear unmistakable words. In *Surah Ra'd*, however, as in it we have the *Meem* also in addition to the *Ra*, both subjects (the one connected with *Ra* and the other with *Meem*) have been brought in, threaded into the same discourse, referring first to the sure and certain knowledge, a subject connected with *Meem*,

and then drawing the attention of the reader to the necessity of pondering over the history of nations. In *Surah Ibrahim*, the reader has been advised to study the laws of nature, to think well over them and to see if there is not the hand of the All-Intelligent Master Mind working behind everything. Obviously, incidents of history and the laws of nature can be grasped and understood only by one who has the power to see. These *Surahs* are, therefore, concerned with such subject-matters as depend upon the power of sight. The claim put forth in *Alif Lam Ra* is no other than this: I am God Almighty Who sees everything. Neither ancient history is hidden from My sight, nor is the working of the laws of nature incomprehensible to Me, nor the story of the creation of Life. Therefore, that guidance alone is perfectly reliable which comes from Me.

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

" Their apostles said : Is there any doubt about Allah, the Creator of the Heavens and the Earth ?" (XIV : 11.) This is a definite statement which the Holy Quran makes about the existence of God. Belief in God's existence, according to Islam, is not superstition, not the result of man's fear of the supernatural or the superhuman; it is part of his very nature, it is ingrained in his very being. Atheism, or any shade of Scepticism, has but a negative existence. It is at once the symbol and proof of the perversion of human nature or intellect. If man is left to his natural propensities, free from external counteracting influences, his inward self will cry for the infinite Being, and his soul will yearn after the Divine Soul.

It is to this naturalness of human belief in God's existence that the following verse refers :
" And set your face straight for religion, turning solely to Allah—the nature constituted by Allah in which He has made men ; there is no changing of Allah's creation; that is the right religion" (XXX:31). Islam claims to be this right religion because it takes its stand on human nature and inculcates belief in the existence of an All-Perfect God as also in His providence. The Prophet of God, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him ! himself gave the correct interpretation of the above verse and pointed out that human nature itself dictates belief in the One, True God as presented by Islam. " Every child that is born " said he, " is born in the right, natural religion ; it is his parents who make him a Jew, a Christian or a Magian ". Then he repeated the words that occur in the Quranic verse : " the nature constituted by Allah in which He has made man ; there is no changing of Allah's creation; that is the right religion" (*Bokhari*).

There is another beautiful verse in the Holy Quran

which points allegorically to the same truth. "And when your Lord brought forth, out of their back, from the children of Adam, their descendants, and set them up as witnesses against their own souls, saying, "Am I not your Lord?" they said, "Yea, we do bear witness." This bearing of witness on the part of man by acknowledging God's existence even at birth, signifies that human nature impels us to believe in the existence and providence of a Supreme Being and revolts at every form of atheism or scepticism.

Apart from the call of human nature, it is not possible for us, unless we are of perverted understanding, to reject the weight of universal evidence in support of God's existence, particularly the evidence of the pious and the devout, of the whole army of prophets and divine messengers who have risen from time to time amongst various peoples and in various countries.

A very strong proof about God's existence is to be found in the order which prevails in the physical and the moral world. Wherever there is order, wherever there is harmony, there must be a Mind behind, who brings about that order and harmony: for, it is unthinkable that various elements and different parts of matter, should, by themselves or by a freak of chance, so adjust themselves as to bring about this order in the universe, or produce a logical chain of events in time.

The existence of a Sentient Being behind the ordered system of the universe is the constant theme of the Holy Quran. "Verily in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day there are signs for men who reflect" (III : 190). Elsewhere, "He hath created the seven heavens in harmony. You can see no fault in the Beneficent One's creation. Then look again, can you see any disorder?" (LXVII : 4). Again, "He created the heavens without pillars and set up mountains on the earth lest it might convulse with you; and He scattered therein all kinds of animals; and We sent

down water from the clouds, and We made all manner of excellent things to grow therein" (XXXI : 11). There are numerous verses of similar strain, that make an appeal to the reason and conscience of man by pointing out that the marked regularity which we notice in the movement of celestial bodies and the alternation of the seasons, and the wonderful adjustment which strikes us in the organic world, afford an undeniable evidence of the existence of God. The advance of physical science is one long history of the discovery of order and harmony in the universe of laws of number and proportion that govern the external world. The science of chemistry has revealed the laws of combination of elements which have gone to make this world of matter. Astronomy has shown the wonders of the vast solar system, and yet the solar system we know is but an insignificant part of millions of systems, which never come into conflict with one another but produce an inconceivably grand harmony, the music of the spheres. The science of biology discloses wonderful adjustment of part to part, of part to whole, and of whole to environment. Geology narrates with mathematical precision the amazing story of the growth of this material habitation of ours. Now, all these phenomena of ordered life in the organic and in-organic world cannot be explained without belief in a Divine Reason and Designing Intelligence. Where there is intelligent action there must be an intelligent Being; therefore nature leads us to God. Finally, there are those who substitute for nature general laws. But do not laws suppose a legislator? And who can this legislator be, if not God?

Another strong argument which the Holy Quran adduces is that whatever we see all around us is subject to limitations; and limitations cannot be explained except by admitting the existence of a Supreme Mind that imposes the limitations. Every species of animal, for instance, has a limited span of life which may not be transcended. Every living organism is limited by the conditions of its environment. It cannot live and grow when placed outside

its environment. It is to this law of limitations which governs all objects, animate or inanimate, including matter and soul, that the Holy Quran refers in these words: "He created every object, and then He defined its measure and set limits to it". Indeed, it is impossible to deny quantitative laws operating in the universe—laws regarding weight, measure and number. How could mere matter, asks the theist, have an idea of weight, measure and number? How could inert matter so adjust itself to quantitative relations as to produce this beautiful world? The Holy Quran puts this question in these words: "Have the objects been created of themselves or have they been their own creators, or have they created the heavens and the earth? Nay, they have no belief" (LII: 36, 7).

Then the Holy Quran leads us to reflect over the unity in variety which is discernible in the vegetable kingdom. The wonderful ramifications of vegetable life, externally so divergent and varied, indicate on reflection a remarkable unity; and this unity leads us to the conception of an Intelligent Being whose Mind pervades all forms of life and imparts to it the unity. We read in the Holy Quran: "He it is who sendeth down water from the sky, and therewith We bring forth buds of every kind: We bring forth the green blade from which We bring forth the thick-clustered grain; and from the date-palm, from the pollen thereof, spring pendent bunches; and (We bring forth) gardens of grapes, and the olive and the pomegranate, alike and unlike. Look upon the fruits thereof, when they bear fruit, and upon its ripening. Lo! herein verily are portents for a people who believe" (VI: 100).

The hand of God is seen not only in plant life but also in human life—creation of man out of dust, propagation of his species, complexities of human life, development of the moral and spiritual sense of men, and, in fact, the regulation of the moral and spiritual order prevailing in the universe. The following is one of the most beautiful passages in the Holy Quran:

"And of His signs is this: He created you of dust and behold, you human beings, ranging widely!

And of His signs is this: He created for you help-mates from yourselves that ye might find rest in them, and He ordained between you love and mercy. Lo! herein indeed are portents for people who reflect.

And of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the difference of your languages and colours. Lo! herein indeed are portents for men of knowledge.

And of His signs is your slumber by night and by day, and your seeking of His bounty. Lo! herein indeed are portents for people who heed.

And of His signs is this: He showeth you the lightning for a fear and for a hope, and sendeth down water from the sky, and thereby quickeneth the earth after her death. Lo! herein indeed are portents for people who understand.

And of His signs is this: The heavens and the earth stand fast by His Command, and afterwards, when He calleth you, Lo! from the earth ye will emerge.

Unto Him belongeth whatsoever is in the heavens and the earth. All are obedient unto Him.

He it is Who produceth creation, then reproduceth it, and it is easier for Him. He is the Sublime Similitude in the heavens and in the earth. He is the Mighty, the Wise" (XXX: 21-28).

But the foregoing arguments at best enable us to make the *inference* that God exists. Absolute *certainty*, however, cannot be attained except by revelation. When God Himself speaks, and His mighty words are realized in life, we transcend the sphere of logical inference, and directly experience Him in our life. Then we are no longer in doubt but find ourselves in

the domain of *certitude*; and then it becomes absolutely impossible for us to deny God's existence any more than we can deny our own existence. The Holy Quran lays stress on this attribute of God in several places—the attribute of speech, by which He Himself gives evidence of His own existence. We read, for instance, "And those who make sincere efforts to approach Us, most surely then do We show them the path that leads to Us". From this we understand that God directly speaks to those who meekly walk along His path. Elsewhere we read, "Eyes cannot reach Him, but He reaches the eyes". This verse beautifully signifies that human beings, finite as they are, cannot attain God by their unaided efforts, and that it is God Himself who responds to their call, and by His ceaseless revelations raises them to His Holy presence. Again, "And when my servants inquire of Me, lo! I am at hand; I respond to the call of the caller when he calls to Me". Again, in Chapter XLI, 31-32, we read, "Lo! those who say, our Lord is Allah, and afterward are upright, the angels descend upon them; saying; Fear nor grieve, but hear good tidings of the paradise which ye are promised. We are your protecting friends in the life of the world and in the hereafter".

According to Islam, God's messengers appear from time to time. They receive messages direct from God. Many of these messages are prophecies that are fulfilled at their appointed time; and, these, in their fulfilment, afford the strongest proof of Divine existence.

HERR HITLER AND THE JEWS

The distressing time the Jews are having in Germany is well-known to readers of the daily press. Herr Hitler is very harsh upon them and seems to wreak vengeance for the crime of Jewry in the past against German Nationalism. More and more strict laws are being made against them which, in the aggregate, are tantamount to an edict of expulsion—perhaps more. They are deprived of getting education in German schools and colleges. The state services are no longer open to them, either civil or military. They are debarred from the use of public places; they are forbidden to go to cinemas, theatres, or to take part in sports and games. To make matters worse Germany has given clear indication of her intention to subject German Jews to ruthless retaliation, far out of proportion to the original crime, should any attempt be made on the life of any Nazi in Germany or abroad.

Why are the Jews so maltreated by Herr Hitler? Has he any justification for his attitude towards them?

A glance at European history is enough to show that the difficulties the Jews are facing in Germany are not new to them. Their condition in other European countries in the past was worse than what it is nowadays in Germany.

In Spain the condition of the Jews was very wretched in the 15th century. Their extravagance and the increasing power of the priesthood brought unspeakable sufferings for them. Their property was not safe; in the choice of residence they could not go out of certain localities assigned to them. Queen Isabella issued an order expelling those who refused to accept Christianity. They, however, were prohibited to take gold and silver with them. In 1497 King Emannual commanded the Jews to quit his territory, but at the

same time issued a secret order that all Jewish children under 14 years should be torn from their mothers and brought up as Christians. The consequent agony drove the wretched mothers to madness and they destroyed their children with their own hands to prevent them from falling into the hands of their persecutors.

Not only in Spain but in other countries also there were troubles and persecutions for the Jews. In Russia, though the Jews had settled in a large part of its territory, they were treated as aliens. Within a year of the outbreak of the Great War so pitiful was their condition that the Russian Government had to issue, as a temporary measure, a decree permitting the Jews to reside freely. (See *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. XIII under the word Jews.)

Similar was the case in Austria. Queen Maria Theresa was distinguished for her enmity towards the Jews, and in 1744 made a futile attempt to secure their expulsion from Bohemia. To render the banishment edict of 1744 inoperative the Jews were required to pay an annual tax of 3,000,000 florins for ten years. In the same year it was decreed that the Jews should pay a tax of 4,000 florins for the right to import their citrons for the feast of booths. (See *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. XIII under the word Jews.)

In England too, the condition of the Jews was hardly any better. In the days of William the Conqueror and William Rufus the Jews were favoured, but as they grew in wealth they grew in unpopularity. On the day of the coronation of Richard the Lion Hearted, some Jews being found present at the speeches from which they were strictly excluded, a popular commotion broke out against them. Their houses were pillaged and burnt. Under the reign of Henry III they were accused of clipping the coin of the realm and as a penalty they had to pay into the royal exchequers a third of their movable property. Ultimately they were driven from England in 1290, leaving in the

hands of the King their property, debts, obligations and mortgages (*Chamber's Encyclopædia*).

So we see that not only in Germany but in other countries too the Jews have had to bear many hardships and Herr Hitler alone cannot be blamed for being unjust to them.

Thirteen hundred years ago it was predicted in the Holy Quran that the Jews were destined to suffer such tortures. We read:

لقد سمع اللہ قول الذین قالوا ان اللہ فقیر ونحن اغنیاء سنکتب ما قالوا و قتلھم الانبیاء بغیر حق و نقول ذوقوا عذاب الحریق -

i.e., God has heard the saying of those who said God is poor while we are rich, certainly We will record their saying and due to their fighting against the prophets of God and conspiring to murder them We will say to these people, "taste the punishment of burning" (III : 181). These people who spoke so impertinently were no other than the Jews. At a time when the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of God be upon him) was waging war against the infidels, the Jews, inspite of their agreement with the Holy Prophet that would establish peace in the country and would face the enemy who attacked Medina, rebelled and refused to take part in the battle. Being proud of their power, they flaunted their wealth in the face of the Holy Prophet and taunted him that not only he himself but his God also was poor. This incurred the displeasure of God who declared that their boastful words had been taken note of and in good time would yield their bitter fruit. How very clearly this prophecy has been fulfilled. Since then the Jews have been suffering calamities in one country after another.

In Germany too their wealth has been the cause of their distress. They were regarded as capitalists and exercised much power. During the Great War German Jews, under Allied influence, created disturbance

in the country, seriously weakening the power of Germany thereby. Now Hitler has realized that the real cause of German defeat was the international conspiracies of the Jews. In view of their treachery in the past he is naturally apprehensive, and wishes to rid his country of this danger.

Is not the wretched condition of the Jews ample proof that the Holy Quran is the revealed book of God? From the time the Jews said that God was poor while they were rich, they have been wandering from one country to another, with no land to call their own. In this age of civilized governments and the enormous power of money, their wealth only weighs upon them like a withering curse and in the wide World there is no joy for them, and no peace.

THE FUTURE RELIGION OF MANKIND—I

In the November issue of 1938 we discussed the conflict of religions in India with a view to assess the chances of success with regard to the three most important religions in the Indian field, *i.e.*, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. In this study we arrived at the conclusion that Hinduism was doomed to fade gradually out of the picture. The remarkable rate at which it continues to lose ground to Islam gives to this conclusion the force, almost, of an obvious fact.

As for the struggle between Islam and Christianity —this question forms part of a problem which affects other countries as well. It merges into a bigger question, moreover. The conflict of religions is not confined to India alone : the whole world forms a battle-field for the main religions in vague.

Out of these world religions two are in a state of dead inertia. Hinduism has never displayed any zeal for proselytism. All competent scholars agree, besides, that this religion possesses no aptitude for missionary activity. Its sacred writings, as a matter of fact, do not sanction any activity of this kind.. On the contrary they denounce them clearly and most emphatically. In visualising the outcome of the conflict of religions on a world-wide scale, Hinduism, therefore, may be left out at the very outset.

The position of Buddhism, too, is very much the same although Buddhism, in its earliest days, gave remarkable proof of the power of expansion. Buddhism covers a considerable portion of the globe, no doubt, and it is by no means confined to a single country, as is the case of Hinduism. But in Ceylon, in Burma in China and in Japan, it has all the appearance of a spent force. It forms the religion of the majority in the Japanese Empire which at the present time is

expanding with a force and suddenness that threatens to precipitate some world crisis. From the stupendous dynamic energy generated by that island race, a superficial observer might be led to believe that Buddhism, possibly, was still a living organism; but those who understand the temper of modern Japan know only too well that the roots of her present greatness lie buried in a soil that has no connection with Buddhism.

Thus the real contest lies between Christianity and Islam—and the ultra-materialistic philosophy of life which threatens to trounce them both.

In the struggle as between Christianity and Islam, the odds, from the material points of view, appear to be in favour of Christianity. The Islamic World, as a political and cultural entity, is to-day stagnant and gone far in decay. The political power of Christianity, on the other hand, as embodied in the world supremacy of Europe and the U. S. A., holds the destiny of mankind in the hollow of its hand. Resources at the command of Christianity are immense: there is no dirth of either men or money for carrying the Gospel of Jesus to non-Christian peoples. The globe is studied thick with active missionary centres well supplied with effective means for influencing the thought of people, such as medical relief, social service, schools, colleges, reading rooms and libraries.

The missions are controlled by various denominations, no doubt, and formerly there was some friction too among them; but the spirit of understanding resulting from the Oecumenical Movement has done much to remove this defect.

On the side of Islam these powerful aids to missionary activity are conspicuous only in their absence. Sectarian divisions are sharp and uncompromising, their baneful influence extending far beyond the confines of legitimate spheres. Of organised missionary effort

there is hardly any sign outside the Ahmadiyya Movement, of which we shall have more to say at a later stage.

Thus, encouraged by the disorganised state of the Muslim World and the pessimism holding sway over Muslim mind due to long centuries of political and cultural decay, when touring Christian Missionaries perceived that the Near and Middle East was in mental ferment, and caught, moreover, the trend of far reaching changes which came in the wake of the Great War, they saw in them the promise of a Muslim mass movement towards Christianity. Books written by some of them during this period—Basil Matthews, W. W. Cash, Samuel M. Zwemer for instance—generally end on a note of joy and—"Great Expectations." The abolition of Khilafat in Turkey; the passing away of the veil; changes in dress and the modes of living; and a tendency towards the Western type of education which came on the heels of closer contact with Europe—in each of these Christian Missionaries detected signs of the eventual triumph of the New Testament over the Quran.

Their expectations, however, have turned out to be no better founded than the great expectations of the delightful, though rather pathetic, hero created by Dickens. That Christianity is making no headway among Muslims is a fact which Christian Missionaries themselves freely admit. As a matter of fact the thoughtful among them are feeling concerned over the poor returns obtained so far and the absence of any better openings for the future. In the *International Review of Missions* of October 1938, we read the following:

> "Few would dispute that, compared with the triumphs of the Christian Church in other fields, missions to Muslims give impression of failure. The results, whether measured in terms of the number of genuine converts or by any other standard, are apparently infinitesimal in proportion to the sacrificial out-pouring of human life and material resources which they have entailed."

And further :

> "Such considerations constituted a 'concern' to the members of the Near East Christian Council, and led to the issue of a request to all those who are interested in the evangelistic work amongst Muslims for a searching and unprejudiced enquiry into the causes of the relative failure of missionary work in Muslim lands."

Obviously, Christianity, in Muslim countries, has run up against a stone wall. The promise of brilliant and rapid progress that was read in the conditions prevailing two decades ago has melted into moonshine. There is no progress worth speaking although legal restrictions are no longer imposed anywhere upon the preaching of Christianity.

In non-Muslim lands, too, the prospects for Christianity are not too rosy. The political power of the white race, which forms the main prop of Church Christianity, is face to face with a direct and open challenge from the Empire of the Rising Sun. Little though they relish it, Europe and America have practically been driven off the soil of China and the Pacific has seen the dawn of a new era. Once Japan is master of the mineral and agricultural wealth that lies buried in Chinese soil, there would be no limit to the expansion of Japanese influence—an expansion bound to be at the cost of the white man. There is nothing more unbearable for a Japanese than the continued supereemacy of Europe and America in the affairs of Asia, and modern Japan has boldly hazarded a die on this momentous issue. With the ebb in the political power of Christendom the wave of Christian influence is bound to recede.

In her European stronghold, too, Christianity is no longer safe and secure. It has been swept out of Russia as though with a broom ; in Germany nothing is more at a discount than the religion of the Sermon on the Mount ; and the intellectual influence wielded by these two states is greater in many respects than

the influence of the dozing democracies which at best are jogging along complacently while their totalitarian rivals swoop on their objective like eagles tearing through the air. Masters of a new technique and an amazing speed, they have caught the imagination of the masses.

There is, in addition, another circumstance bound to operate to the detriment of Christian missionary effort as conditions change from mediæval to modern in backward countries. The rise of national spirit, and the improvement in education and medical facilities attendant thereon, would naturally lead to contraction in the sphere of Christian influence through these and similar channels passing into the hands of national governments.

So much with regard to external factors. Now let us turn to the intrinsic worth of the spiritual values as presented by these two religions. In this respect Christianity is seriously handicapped in the race. Beyond the questionable merits of the Sermon on the Mount and the emotional exploitation of the one-sided theory that God is love, there are few spiritual values in the teachings of Church Christianity. Its doctrines, are confused and confusing, and rather absurd—especially with regard to the person of Jesus and his position in the Church. If Jesus was not a human being, how can he serve as a model for mortal man to follow in life. Moreover among Christians themselves the thought is growing that the divinity attributed to Jesus is not justified in view of his humanity. Charles Gore, formerly Bishop of Oxford, in *Jesus of Nazareth*, writes :

> " Even one, who like myself, believes that the account given by St. Paul and St. John is the true account, and is faithfully safeguarded in the official creed of the Church, must admit that the tradition of the Church (as distinct from its official creed) had lamentably obscured the real Jesus by letting men half forget his humanity in its zeal for his divinity, and his example and ethical teaching in its zeal for his atoning sacrifice. That is why Sir John

Seeley's *Ecce Homo*—the first and still by far the best of what one may call the humanitarian Lives of Jesus published in English—came upon the Orthodox world sixty-three years ago as a terrible shock, simply because of its faithful portrature of the Man."

The claim to divinity *on behalf* of Jesus, is based on the expression "Son of God" used very loosely in the Old and the New Testament. A quite recent book, *An introduction to the Study of Christianity*, by Frank Dodd, contains and illuminating discussion with regard to this expression. He writes :

"The other title, *Son of God*, also calls for careful examination. The word *son* seems to have been used by the Hebrews in a very elastic sense, and frequently had nothing to do with generation. Thus the biblical authors use the word in an unfavourable sense when speaking of "Sons of the wicked one" (Matt. xiii. 38), "Sons of Belial" (1 Sam. x. 27), 'Son of hell' (Matt. xxiii. 15). So we are not surprised to find the title *Son of God* used in the Bible with some freedom. In the Old Testament days the expression was sometimes used to mean a heavenly being, not partaking of the divine nature, but probably corresponding to some extent to the mediæval ideas of an archangel (*cf.* Gen. vi. 2 with Job i. 6). Considerable light is shed on the title *Son of God* in John x. 35, 36, where Jesus himself is represented as saying to the Jews : 'If he called them gods unto whom the word of God came ... ...say ye of him whom the father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemeth, because *I said I am the Son of God*.' Now a critic may possibly be sceptical as to whether Jesus actually used the words here attributed to him. The synoptic evangelists do not represent him as calling himself *Son of God*, and we find that he charged his immediate disciples to keep secret the fact that he had a claim to that title (Matt. xvi. 15—20). And although the Fourth Gospel puts the words above quoted into the mouth of Jesus, we do not attach to the fact the importance that we might otherwise do, seeing that, as we have already seen, this author probably laid himself out to indicate the more recondite truths of Christianity than to reproduce with verbal accuracy exactly what he had heard Jesus say. Consequently we cannot be certain

that the words above quoted were actually used by Jesus in his discussion with the Jews, but nevertheless we at least know that they represent the opinion of that writer who is most frequently referred to in support of the traditional doctrine of the nature of Jesus. And it is quite clear that this opinion is that the reason why Jesus could claim to be *Son of God* was that the father had sanctified him and sent him into the world.

"And in harmony with the foregoing we find that Paul seems to apply the title *Son of God* to any man endowed with the Christ spirit. 'As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the Sons of God' (Rom. viii. 14). The expression in the Fourth Gospel (i. 12), 'He gave power to become the Sons of God' would appear to have a similar meaning. But in other places the same phrase means simply what in more modern English we should call 'a godly man'. For example Matthew and Mark make the Roman Centurion on the occasion of the crucifixtion of Jesus say 'Truly this man was Son of God' (not *the* Son of God), and Luke makes him say 'certainly this was a righteous man'. The natural inference is that in these cases the expressions *Son of God* and *rihgteous man* have an identical meaning".

Again,

"The general outlook of the disciples on the much vexed question of the nature and mission of Jesus, is well exemplified in the great speech made by Peter (Acts ii) on the day of the Pantecost. The orator is reported as saying: 'Young men of Israel hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs.....being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands crucified and slain.....This Jesus hath God raised up whereof we are all witnesses.....Therefore let all the houses of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ'.

"The above is of great interest as setting forth the attitude of the primitive Church with regard to the position held by Jesus. It will be observed that Peter gives no hint of regarding him as a kind of secondary Deity, existing

co-eternally with God. On the contrary Peter speaks of 'Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God', who for certain reasons which seemed sufficient to the divine mind, was made by God both Lord and Christ. The natural interpretation of Peter's words is that although Jesus of Nazareth may doubtless have been foreordained to his exalted mission, nevertheless he was actually born into the world as a human being, and that this human being was at some period subsequent to his birth made by God both Lord and Christ. This is entirely consistent with what would appear to be the belief of the evangelists that Jesus became the Christ at the time of his baptism."

Now let us take into consideration another claim of Church Christianity, the claim, namely, that Jesus is the only saviour. If really God is Love, and if really God loves all mankind equally—past, present and future—how can Jesus be the only saviour? Did God do nothing to save the countless generations which passed away before the time of Christ? This is a serious question and many Christian thinkers are themselves beginning to raise it. Dr. Kraemer, whose book, *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*, has made such stir in Christian missionary circles, would seem to be aware of this question though dimly and rather intermittantly. In *The International Review of Missions*, January 1939, in the course of a review article upon the book mentioned above, D. S. Cairn calls Dr. Kraemer mildly to task for oscilating, though perhaps unconsciously, between two views which contradict each other. Mr. Cairn writes:

"It corresponds with what I have called the Barthian element in his thinking which, as I understand it, implies that God has given no direct revelation of Himself to that vast *Massa perditionis*, the fallen human race, save in the direct revelation given in the Bible. But it does not correspond nearly so well to that other and more 'generous judgment' to which he also gives expression....."—the judgment, namely, that—"God shines revealingly through the works of His creation (nature), through the thirst and quest for truth and beauty, through conscience and the thirst and quest for goodness, which throbs in man even

in his condition of forlorn sinfulness, because God is continuously occupying himself and wrestling with man in all ages and with all peoples " (*The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*, page 125).

G. van Der Leeuw, in his scholarly and monumental work, translated into English by J. E. Turner and published under the name *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*, holds the view that all other religions besides Christianity cannot with justification be condemned as entirely spurious.

If Divine Revelation is not the exclusive quality of Christianity, if other nations too have been favoured with it in their own times, can the claim of Church Christianity be substantiated that Christianity is the final complete religion and embodies the culmination in the development of religion ?

Other considerations apart, one way to decide this question is to find out whether Jesus understood the Revelation that came to him as embodying the Final, Complete and Universal religion. When we turn to the New Testament, Mt. X : 5, 6 at once comes to our mind, as well as Mt. XV : 24. Surely if Jesus, indisputively the best judge on the question, took his mission to be limited only to " the lost sheep of the house of Israel," who dare claim to extend that mission to all mankind ?

As for Mt. xxviii : 19, on which rests the claim to universality of mission, the following passage* effectively settles the question :—

" At the end of Matthew's Gospel we find that Jesus is said to have enjoined his 11 disciples to " teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt. xxviii : 19). It seems

*An Introduction to the study of Christianity, by Frank Dodd, page 115.

difficult to accept the foregoing as a genuine saying of Jesus. Firstly, the words are alleged to have been spoken at the post resurrection visit of Jesus to Galilee, an incident which is, as has already been pointed out (page 48), inconsistent with the narrative of Luke. If the directions stated to have been given by Jesus really were authentic, they must have been recognised by his immediate followers as being of the utmost importance, seeing that not only do they purport to shed a flood of light on the nature of the Deity, but also they prescribe the sacramental formula necessary for a valid reception into the new community. But the other three evangelists make no mention of these directions, and it seems inconceivable that all three should have thought them unimportant.

"Secondly, as has already been pointed out, after two decades had elapsed the question of the reception of gentiles into the Christian Community was treated as an entirely new problem by the apostles and elders assembled at Jerusalem, and these apostles included Peter and probably several other members of 'the eleven' referred to in Mt. xxviii. 16. The obvious inference is that the apostolic band, as existing on the occasion of the Council of Jerusalem, knew nothing as to any instructions given by Jesus to baptise all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

"Thirdly, Paul seems to have been quite ignorant of the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity. Almost all his Epistles contain in the first few verses the same form of greeting: *Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.* There is nothing whatever to lead us to infer that Paul either (*a*) attributed the Godhead to Jesus, or (*b*) worshipped the Holy Spirit as one of the persons of the Deity. It is indeed quite inconceivable that Paul would have consistently given such prominence to his formula if he had accepted the doctrine embodied in the formula current in our own day: *The blessings of God*

Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost be among you and remain with you always. The teaching of Paul was most unquestionably that *there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ* (1 Tim. ii. 5). He also taught that God manifests Himself by the operation of His Breath or Spirit. But Paul gives us no hint that this Holy Spirit is in any sense an independent entity or Person. On the contrary just as the Psalmist says : 'With his own right hand and with his holy arm hath he gotten himself victory' (Ps. xcviii), without implying that God's hands and arms have independent volition, so Paul similarly says :

'God Who hath given unto us His Holy Spirit (1 Thess. iv. 8).

'God Who hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit' (2 Cor. v. 5).

'We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God' (1 Cor. ii. 12), etc.

"Consequently we can hardly doubt that the doctrine of Paul was that God is one, and is the Saviour of all men (1 Tim. iv. 10, Tit. iii. 4, 5) ; that God may be said to manifest Himself by means of His Breath or Spirit ; and that this Spirit illuminated in a very special sense the man Jesus, who consequently became the Christ our Lord."

The threefold argument in the above passage is definite and conclusive, and Mt. XXVIII : 19 being of doubtful value, all the indication that we have concerning the idea of the founder of Christianity as to whether his mission was universal or limited to the Israelites, it contained in Mt. X : 5,6 and XV : 24. Thus, whatever attractive theories Christian divines might read into the words of the New Testament

teaching, the fact remains that the author of this teaching had intended it only for the Jews.

Moreover, far from claiming that his teaching embodied a complete code for mankind and was therefore designed and intended to endure for all times, he made it clear to his disciples that he could not guide them into all truth as they were not capable of shouldering the burden, and that he was leaving that work to be done by the spirit of truth who was to come after him. (Jn XVI : 7 to 13.)

An ingenious idea is put forward by Christian missionaries when confronted with this passage that by the spirit of truth here spoken is meant the Holy Ghost, who, in the past—resurrection period completed the teaching. Jn XVI : 7 is clear, however, that this is not so ; the spirit of truth does not stand for the Holy Ghost as Jesus says that the spirit of truth cannot come "if I go not away." Now the Holy Ghost was already with Jesus and had been with him all through the period of his ministry, and Jesus could not thruthfully have said : "If I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you."

Further, the teaching of Jesus is far from complete as it affords no guidance to man in many aspects of his life, out of which we shall here indicate only two :

(1) The sex question, in a way, is the most fundamental question for man. The family ties—more especially the ties between husband and wife—form the

basis of Society, and the sex question has a bearing on the family which no other question has. If a religious teaching fails to safeguard against dangers which disrupt and vitiate sex relations, it cannot be regarded as a complete religion. Christianity in this respect does by no means come up to the standard. Not only has it failed to regulate the sex life of man on a workable basis, it has taken up an attitude that is by far the worst for any religious, philosophical or social system to adopt, the attitude, namely, that sex life is something derogatory, that repression of this perfectly normal and healthy urge best becomes a man of God. The teachings of both Jesus and St. Paul lend itself to the interpretation that the physical relationship between the sexes is of an essentially sinful nature and that the higher life demands rigid continence. With regard to the church teaching in the matter of divorce, it is difficult to conceive that any fair-minded, well read man would to-day care to identify himself with the view that divorce should be permissible only in cases of adultery, and that the divorced parties should not be permitted to contract another marriage.

In addition, there is the further question whether the monogamic system of marriage is the best in all circumstances. Westermark in his *History of Human Marriage* all but returned a negative answer. The Great War seriously disturbed the sex ratio in the population of some European countries and the next War (which by all accounts is unavoidable and which in butchery would far surpass the last) would further open the eyes of those who cling to monogamy.

(2) Questions which group round the economic problem of the distribution of wealth, are, in the present age, frought with the most dangerous possibilities. On these matters Christianity has no solution to offer beyond the vague and impracticable generalities of the Sermon on the Mount, such as : " Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also," and " If any man will sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." Beyond this Christianity has no remedy for those social and economic evils which culminated in the Reign of Terror in France and the horrors of the Red Revolution in Russia.

REVIEWS

"Religion in Essence and Manifestation," *by G. Van Der Leeuw, translated by J. E. Turner, George Allen and Unwin, London. 25s.*

Man's progress from primitive conditions to a highly civilised being, and the possibilities of further attainment which as yet lie in the womb of futurity, constitute the complex pattern of a thousand and one activities designed by him, either consciously, sub-consciously or unconsciously, to rid himself of certain disabilities to which he is subject constitutionally. His body, the vehicle for the expression of his soul, is made of matter. Therefore it is subject to all those limitations to which matter is subject. Disease and other kinds of suffering are some of the forms which these limitations take. The history of civilisation is the history of the struggle of man to make himself immune from all that is destructive in nature. Architecture; the art of making clothes; knowledge of the food value in herbs and fruits; medicine; surgery; engineering; all these are the result of an effort, on the part of mankind, to rid itself of those limitations which the material body imposes upon the soul.

But the human body is no more than a slave perpetually carrying out the behests of the human soul. In other words, it is the soul inside that is continually beating its wings against the iron bars of the cage, in desperate attempts (we should not call them vain) to fling the door open somehow and to soar away into an atmosphere where there are no storms, no cages and no bars.

This is with regard to secular activities. But these activities do not represent the totality of the stirrings manifested by the human soul. On the spiritual plain too man is instinctively striving, as it were, to learn to behave better and better; to avoid the bitter experience of "inner twinges" attendant on

certain courses, of action. The inner twinges, called conscience by scientists, are a symptom of the original, essential and inherent tendency of the soul—the tendency of which the manifestation through secular activities has already been spoken off.

Thus the germs which develop into secular civilisation and those whose activity has been given the name of " religion ", both spring into existence from the same point in the nature of man—or rather the same quality, namely, his weakness. Religion is as natural and essential to man as the inerring faculty which makes the vines throw their tendrils firmly round those objects nearby which bear a promise of ability to give it support. Secular civilisation is the result of the soul being encased in a material body. It is incidental to the inseparable combination in this life of soul with body. The original striving of the soul is on a different plain – the plain called " spiritual ". It is the inherent desire for higher and still higher perfection.

The religious sense of man is inborn in him. It is not the result of mental evolution. Imperfect in himself, he is continually on the lookout for some one stronger to rely upon for help in removing those imperfections : himself weak, he wants a strong friend, and a strong guardian.

Not only realisation of but also search after Power form the basis for the religious development of man. But the same two circumstances form, too, the basis for deterioration in religion whenever that takes place.

In the religious history of mankind there are, really speaking, two drifts—one in the right direction under the direct stimulus and guidance of Divine Revelation ; and the other away from the right direction during periods when the meaning of a Divine Revelation in the hands of any group is lost in the passage of time. At times such as these man loses sight of the real Power ; but his capacity to attach himself to power, to lie at its feet, so to say, like the faculty of devotion in a dog, is, on the other hand, continually active. When his real Master

is not visible to him he attaches himself to other objects, and nature worship, animism, idolatry and other such cults spring into being.

An atheist would most probably laugh at this idea but not the author of *Religion in Essence and Manifestation.* He does not believe it is possible "in treating historical problems, especially in the sphere of religion, to set one's own religion as scrupulously as possible in the background and to create the impression that, with reference to religions, one was wholely free from prejudice"..... "I follow another course and deliberately begin our survey of religious phenomena from the Christian view point." At the same time he plainly disavows advocacy of any dogmatic treatment which, in all religions save Christianity itself, can perceive only spurious religion and degeneration.

History of religion therefore is the history of Divine Revelation vouchsafed to various groups at various times. Here is a fundamental difference between treatment of this subject by an atheist and by one who believes in God. The point of view held by philosophers of the former school is that the religious activity of man has developed from that terrible fear which gripped the primitive man, placed as he was at the mercy of gigantic forces of nature and countless beasts of prey roaming the earth. But the latter school believes that religious development is not due to fear alone. The ball is set rolling in the right direction by the stimulous of Divine Revelation. The way to convince an atheist of the truth of this view is not to have recourse to ancient historical data for the purpose, for it is notorious that such data can be manipulated just as one might feel disposed to use it. The way to convince him is to convince him first of the existence of God by other means.

That is not to say, however, that proof is lacking in the data supplied by ancient history of Divine Revelation being originally at the basis of the religious activity of man. "At all events we realise that reflection on the causes of natural phenomena cannot of itself constitute religion. Furthermore, it is still

more difficult to regard religion as an universal error or (as Durkheim neatly puts it) a 'system of hallucinatory images', an 'immense metaphor with no objective value'. Quite apart from such general considerations, again, the limitation to Nature is wholely untenable since, in the first place, Nature is neither the sole nor even the principle feature in religion; while in the second it is neither Nature nor the natural objects that man worships, but always Power that reveals itself in these." "It cannot therefore be the case that religion arose from 'Worship of Nature' simply because the concept of 'Nature' is quite modern, having been first contrasted with human culture by Rousseau and the romantics. For neither the primitive nor the ancient world was the 'Nature' conceived as a realm set over against man and his deeds; nor, again, were the individual objects of nature in principle distinguished by primitive and ancient man from artificial things."

God, therefore, revealed Himself to man in the first instance, and has, since, continued to reveal Himself in successive stages. These Revelations came to different groups at various times, because humanity being split up into groups at varying levels of cultural and mental development, their needs and their power of grasp varied in the case of each, and the quality and extent of the Revelation was determined by these two factors. An international religion common to the whole human race would have been out of place while yet the racial or geographical groups were isolated from each other for lack of speedy and safe means of communication. The international religion could come only when man had reached the threshold of the international era. The Complete Revelation, moreover, could come only when man had so far advanced mentally as to grasp its full significance. And, further, the Final Revelation, from the very nature of the case, had to be a concentrated, co-ordinated essence of all fragmentary Revelations that had gone before, together with the addition of whatever still remained to be revealed. Only that Religious system can truthfully be called the culmination of religious development that fulfils all these requirements.

When the development of religion is treated along lines followed in *Religion in Essence and Manifestation* the question as to which of the prevailing religions represented this culmination, was bound to arise. The author of this scholarly work returns the answer that Christianity was that religion. But does Christianity embody all that the final complete religion should embrace. According to the standpoint of this work Christianity is the Final Revelation because it presents God as Love. Apart from the question whether such presentation is exclusively a feature of Christianity, this religion does not satisfy the other requirements of the complete religion. For instance, the complete religion should have a complete guidance to offer, *i.e.*, a guidance that covers all spheres of human activity. How does Christianity stand this test. Again, a complete religion should furnish its devotees with complete knowledge concerning sin—the avenues of its attack on man and the way to block these avenues. Obviously, moreover, Love is not the only aspect or the only attribute of God ; then how can Christianity be the culminating religion when it leaves the other aspects almost completely out of its presentation ?

The Moslem World, *a Christian quarterly Review of Current events, literature, and thought among Moslems, January, 1939.*

In the first twelve pages two writers concern themselves with appreciations, and aspects bearing on Islam, of Dr. Kraemer's book, *The Christian Message in a non-Christian World.* The summary of this book, as W. G. Shellabear gives it, reveals Dr. Kraemer to be a man of considerable learning, though his understanding of Islam betrays lack of real depth, going hand in hand with a dangerous tendency to fix on non-essentials and to draw wrong conclusions from them.

Mohammadan Teaching about Christ by James Robson is as scholarly as his article on "Is the Moslem Hell Eternal" in *The Moslem World* of October 1938.

We note that this writer, in connection with IV : 155-57

plainly admits that "the matter became dubious to them" "is a perfectly possible translation of ولا كن شبه لهم.

As for the article on "Muhammad and Divorce in the Quran" we wonder whether it has stuck Dr. Zwemer that the conclusion drawn in the last paragraph of this article destroys and condemns the impression he sought to create, consciously or unconsciously, while making a plea for increased missionary effort in Arabia in the *World Dominion*, issue of October 1938 by writing that the Mohammadan doctrine of divorce had poisoned the life of children throughout the Moslem World, and that no religion had dealt more harshly with woman than Islam. Richard Bell, of the University of Edinburgh, concludes his article as follows :

> "In this matter of divorce the Prophet seems to have been too far in advance of his time and surroundings, and the genial commonsense of his regulations was lost in a tedious interpretation. Had these been carried out in the sense in which he apparently intended them, the worst injustices of the Moslem law of divorce would have been avoided."

These words clearly mean that, whatever defects there may be in the divorce laws operative in Moslem lands, neither the Quran nor Islam are in any way responsible for them.

It may be remarked here that, but for confusing attempts on the part of the writer to extract doubtful meanings from the date of revelations of some of the verses, this article, would have been of better value.

The International Review of Mission, *London, January 1939.*

The most interesting items in this issue are: a survey of the year 1938 with regard to missionary activity all over the world ; and a review article on Dr. Kraemer's book, ***The Christian Message in a non-Christian World***, that seems to have created much interest in missionary circles. The situation in

China appears to be favourable for the growth of Christianity through medical aid and other kinds of relief services rendered by missionary organisations. General Chiang Kai-Shek, himself a Christian, welcomes missionary aid in these fields as indeed he is bound to welcome aid for the wounded and the refugees from whatever quarter it might come. No other field contains hope of any striking success.

A characteristic feature of this survey is the strong sympathy for China, even to the extent of open condemnation of Japan. Japan may not have a case against China, but she certainly has a strong grievance against the civilised world for continuing to ignore her pressing and legitimate needs, *e.g.*, lack of markets and the ever increasing pressure of population. Nevertheless, sympathy for China is natural, considering the ordeal she is going through. But it is puzzling to note that this survey expresses no sympathy for the cause of the poor Palestinian Arabs, though that country is mentioned in the report, which fact throws the sympathy shown for China open to suspicion that no small portion of it may either be the result or part of anti-Japanese propaganda. The review article on Dr. Kraemer's book is of exceptional interest on acconnt of the courage and conviction with which it insists that in all religions, whether religions of revelation or others, there are always traces, at any rate, of something which we cannot justly brush aside as only the work of man's mind and no more. If indeed God is Love, and if he really loves all mankind equally, there is no reason to assume that he showed partiality to certain racial or geographical groups by revealing Himself only to them and not to the others. The teaching of Islam on this point is that there is no people on this earth to whom at one time or another God did not send a Warner (The Holy Quran XXXV : 24).

World Dominion, *a quarterly international Review of Christian progress, World Dominion Press, London.*

Difficulties which Protestant Churches are facing in some European countries are described under the caption : " Europe faces a new tragedy." Another article draws attention to the

position of the Coptic Church in Modern Nationalist Egypt. The appeal for more hands issued by a worker on the border of Nepal is interesting and contains a lesson for Muslims. The following paragraph gives some idea of the trying conditions encountered by many Christian missionaries :

> "To those whom the Lord is calling for this work I would say a few words as to how the fight has to be carried on. There are no towns along the border, only villages. This means living in a village, in an Indian house in Indian style, unless the mission buys land and builds. I personally feel that this latter proceeding means that we should 'dig ourselves in', and would be unable to advance when the time came. After living in Nautanwa for eight years in an Indian house, I would never feel happy to return to European standards, and have now moved on to my new station Barlni (Nautanwa being staffed by others) and have started there in a two-roomed house in a row of Indian houses. One room is used for dispensary work, and the other as a living room. Dwelling in this way among the people, contacts are made at once with those around, and an immediate hearing is obtained for our message. The house is rented by the month, and one is free to move on as opportunity arises. The actual cost of living is a fraction of what it would be in a 'bungalow' station, and thus one is able to use the money the Lord sends for more urgent needs."

Annual Report Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya, Qadian, ***Compiled by Fateh Mohammad Sayal, M.A., Nazir A'la.***

This report, published with some delay, is the official summary of the record of activities of the various departments of the Ahmadiyya Movement from the 1st of May, 1936 to 30th April 1937. It runs into 304 pages, out of which 152 are devoted to one department—Najarat Da'wat-wat-Tabligh, *i.e.*, the department for propagation and missionary activity—an indication of the importance which attaches in the eyes of the community to the work of propagation.

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